

WIPRO expands in North Rhine-Westphalia



The Indian IT company opens a new European data center in Meerbusch.

With the new European data center in Meerbusch, WIPRO has opened its third branch in North Rhine-Westphalia. The 15 million euro investment represents one of the biggest commitments by an Indian company in Europe. 150 jobs will be created here.

The data center was officially inaugurated in September. On an area of approximately 10,000 square meters, WIPRO provides its globally operating customers primarily with server capacity and outsourcing of IT services in Europe. "If a medium-sized company has 40 to 50 servers and wants to save costs, then it outsources them to us," explains Christian Eberhardt of WIPRO.

Besides the data center in Meerbusch, WIPRO Technologies GmbH operates branches in Cologne and Munich with approximately 450 employees. Throughout the world, the Indian parent company WIPRO Limited, the third-largest IT services exporter, employs around 120,000 people and supplies customers in 54 countries.

Non-stop from Tokyo to Düsseldorf



Lufthansa is bringing Japan and North Rhine-Westphalia even closer together: From the summer of 2012 the airline is offering direct flights from Düsseldorf to Tokyo six times a week.

The German airline Lufthansa has extended its long-haul service at Düsseldorf Airport.

The non-stop flight from North Rhine-Westphalia's capital city to Tokyo not only underlines the important role of Düsseldorf International Airport as Germany's third-largest airport. There is more that links the two cities: For Japanese companies Düsseldorf is the number one city in Germany – over 500 Japanese firms have located in North Rhine-Westphalia. A quarter of all Japanese people living in Germany call Düsseldorf their home. Only recently, Düsseldorf and North Rhine-Westphalia joined Japan in celebrating the 150th anniversary of their economic relations.

The new direct flight connection opens up prospects of even closer cooperation. "A direct flight connection between Düsseldorf and Tokyo is the culmination of our many years of work to strengthen and expand our Japan location," underlines Düsseldorf's mayor Dirk Elbers.

UPS extends its logistics center at Cologne/Bonn Airport



The logistics company UPS is investing 144 million euros in the extension and modernization of its sorting center, thereby creating 200 new jobs.

The American logistics company UPS is extending its sorting capacity at Cologne/Bonn Airport by more than two thirds: Instead of 110,000 parcels per hour, by the end of 2013 it will be possible to handle a total of 190,000 shipments per hour. To date, this is the largest single investment in the airport's history.

For UPS, the central location in Europe, the good transport links and the weather conditions for all-year-round flight operations in particular are the decisive factors in favor of Cologne/Bonn location. The airport is the company's number one European hub.

With 2,300 employees the service provider is already the biggest employer at Cologne/Bonn Airport. Prime Minister Hannelore Kraft welcomes the UPS investment. "This is a decision in favor of good future prospects for the Cologne/Bonn cargo airport and a commitment to North Rhine-Westphalia as a logistics location in the center of Europe."

Bayer and TU Dortmund are researching for the factory of the future



The new research center INVITE, a landmark collaboration between research and industry, is being built at Leverkusen's Chempark.

The new research center INVITE has been in operation at Chempark in Leverkusen since the end of September. INVITE stands for: Innovations, Visions and Technologies. Bayer Technology Services and the TU Dortmund want to work together here to create the "factory of the future" and to develop new resource-conserving, efficient production concepts for the chemical, pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries.

One of the first projects to rely on the infrastructure of INVITE is the EU project "F3 – Factory" ("Fast, Flexible, Future"), which unites 25 consortium partners, including seven of the leading European chemical companies. The goal is to strengthen and extend the technology leadership of the European chemical industry with faster, more flexible manufacturing processes.

The idea is for chemical factories to be designed according to the building block concept. Modular standard appliances are put together in containers which in turn can be connected in series to form a complete plant.

In addition, the project is designed to benefit teaching. Students at the TU Dortmund can experience business-related research at first hand in practical seminars. "INVITE represents successful collaboration: universities and industry partners can now develop innovative technologies even more efficiently," says TU principal Prof. Dr. Ursula Gather.

“Smart Wheels” project networks the electric car



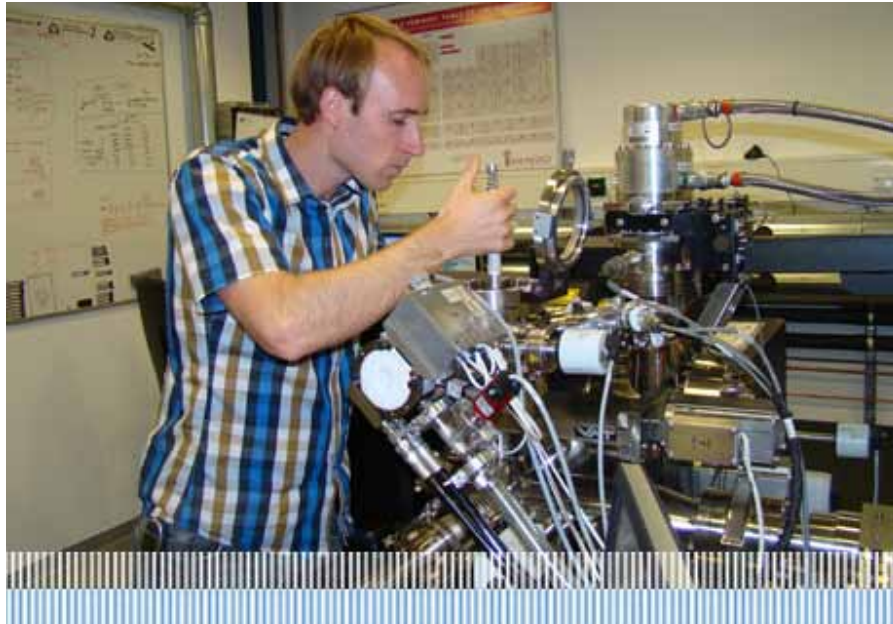
The Research Institute for Operations Management (FIR) at RWTH Aachen University has developed an overall concept for the seamless energy supply of electric car traffic.

For over two years, the Aachen-based research scientists and nine further partners worked on refining business models and suitable ICT (information and communications technology) services related to the topic of electric mobility. Above all, they tackled the question of how electric cars can be integrated into smart electricity grids in such a way that the vehicle can be supplied permanently with electricity.

The result: a comprehensive concept for the ‚smart charging‘ of electric vehicles. In this context, smart charging means the optimal charging of the vehicle battery by linking to the worldwide information network. To this end, the researchers gave consideration to the available energy output in the electricity grid – as well as possible bottlenecks – and the cost-efficient design of the lifespan of a vehicle battery.

The charging concept they developed caters for both economic and traffic-logistics aspects. For example, it also guarantees that the driver can see at all times whether the capacity of the battery is sufficient for the distance to be covered, or whether recharging en route will be necessary.

Top researcher for top location in Düsseldorf



The Australian Humboldt scholar Dr. Ross Marceau has chosen the Max Planck Institute for Iron Research in Düsseldorf as the location for his cutting-edge research in the field of light alloys and the development of new types of steel.

Ross Marceau could choose freely: With the renowned Humboldt scholarship he could have conducted research at any institute in the world, yet he decided in favor of the Max Planck Institute for Iron Research (MPIE) in Düsseldorf. Its good reputation extended as far as his thesis supervisor in Australia, who recommended the MPIE to him.

In the fields nanotechnology, microtechnology and new materials, North Rhine-Westphalia is regarded throughout Germany as the leading location. This makes the state's research institutes attractive for young top researchers like Marceau.

Besides its close links with other research institutes, what impresses him in particular about the MPIE's is its excellent facilities. This includes the 3D atom probe, of which only very few of comparably high performance exist in the world. The probe allows the three-dimensional depiction of atoms.

In the next three years Marceau wants to study the atomic structure of a certain type of steel which is both extremely malleable and hard. These properties are in great demand for sheet metal production in the automotive industry.

Georg Fischer Automotive invests 36 million euros in Mettmann



With the construction of a new production plant, Mettmann's biggest employer confirms its commitment to the location.

With a new manufacturing plant the Swiss automotive company is making it clear that it intends to extend the company's 100-year history at the Mettmann location. The modern AMR ("Aeration Moulding Robotpouring") plant features a unique assembly line for the production of lightweight castings for the automotive industry. With the new AMR the company can cater more quickly for customers' needs and also process lighter, more sophisticated materials.

In July 2012, operations are scheduled to start at the plant which promises several advantages: CEO Andres Güll explains that staff can be physically unburdened thanks to the use of robots at particular load points. In addition, reduced energy requirements and optimized technology for heat recovery ensure the necessary resource efficiency.

"We are investing at the right time," says Güll. The European automobile market is on the rise. New registrations of passenger cars in the EU have risen in 2011 by 7.7 percent compared to the previous year. Car manufacturers order their castings in Europe and also produce the vehicles here. Short and therefore inexpensive routes are called for.

Record year for mechanical engineering in North Rhine-Westphalia



The VDMA (Verband Deutscher Maschinen- und Anlagenbau – German Engineering Foundation) North Rhine-Westphalia expects an 18.7 percent increase in sales for the current year.

Sales in the North Rhine-Westphalian mechanical and plant engineering industry are expected to reach 44 billion euros this year. Exports are increasing by 22 percent to 26.6 billion euros, with domestic sales rising by 13 percent to 17.4 billion euros.

In North Rhine-Westphalia, mechanical engineering is regarded as the core area of industry and is the biggest industrial employer in the state with nearly 190,000 employees. In 2011, the companies provided new jobs for a total of 5,200 people. The sector is very dependent on global economic development: Following the crisis years 2008 and 2009, the strong upswing can be attributed in particular to the positive trend in incoming orders and a strong export share of 75 percent. "The results are impressive. At 91 percent, technical capacity was utilized to the full in the 3rd quarter of 2011. This is a very high figure," confirms Dr. Reinhold Festge, CEO of VDMA NRW.

The VDMA is also anticipating a positive trend for the industry in 2012. As long as the debt and financial crisis does not spread to the financial and banking sector, the foundation expects growth of around 5 percent for 2012.

Nisshinbo set to become the biggest Japanese employer in North Rhine-Westphalia



Nisshinbo Holding (NISH) plans to take over the TMD Friction Group, pending antitrust decisions. The 440 million euro investment in the takeover will make NISH the world market leader for brake linings.

The globally operating conglomerate Nisshinbo Holding is active in the areas brakes, mechatronics, textiles and electronics. It now wants to merge its automotive brake business Nisshinbo Brake with the long-established Germany company TMD Friction Group, a leading manufacturer of brake linings for automotive and industrial applications.

TMD Friction Group has three production locations and approximately 2,000 employees in Germany. With the locations Leverkusen (800 staff), Essen (550 staff) and Hamm (340 staff), the majority of the employees are to be found in North Rhine-Westphalia. This indirectly makes Nisshinbo the biggest Japanese employer in the Rhine and Ruhr regions.

Koji Nishihara, President of Nisshinbo Brake and board member of the holding company, commended the successful market position and over 100-year company history of TMD: "As a result of the shared competences of TMD and Nisshinbo Brake, managed under the umbrella of Nisshinbo Holdings, the world's largest and most efficient manufacturer of brake linings for the automotive industry has been established."

60 new jobs for Hagen



By using an innovative laser welding technology, automotive supplier Prevent TWB significantly reduces the weight of rear-seat backrests in vehicles.

This innovation helps to reduce overall vehicle weight and hence also CO₂ emissions. With these arguments the Hagen-based module supplier was able to win the Volkswagen Group as a client: In the future, Prevent TWB will supply the complete volume of rear-seat backrests for a total of 1.8 million vehicles annually, including the models VW Golf and Passat, Audi A3, Skoda Octavia and Seat Leon.

Like many other suppliers, at the beginning of 2010 the Hagen-based rear-seat specialist, then still called TWB Presswerk, was caught up in the crisis. It was the acquisition by Prevent DEV GmbH, the core company of the globally operating Prevent Group headquartered in Wolfsburg, which saved the 490 jobs at the parent plant in Hagen and the Brazilian location Atibaia. Thanks to the successful turnaround the company was able to increase its workforce by 60 new jobs to a total of 550.